DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 555 EA 023 056

AUTHOR Pancrazio, Sally Bulkley
TITLE Building an Accountability System in Illinois.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Boston, MA, April 16-20, 1990).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Accountability; *Educational Assessment; Educational Legislation; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Policy Formation; *Politics of Education; School Effectiveness; *State Legislation; Summative Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Illinois

ABSTRACT

A historical overview of political events in Illinois that led to the establishment and implementation of a performance accountability system, school report cards, is presented in this report. The discussion shows that although statewide events influenced policymakers, local conditions and ethos also affected the result. The educational establishment opposed the initiative, arguing that it encouraged comparison among schools. Proponents included public groups, who based their arguments on the public's right to know and the need for uniform data and accountability. A conclusion is that although school report cards have been perceived as political symbols in response to public criticism of the schools, they have restructuring potential to provide rich data and information on student needs. The appendix contains a list of states with report cards or plans for implementation and a copy of the accountability amendment to the Illinois School Code. (13 references) (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED333555

BUILDING AN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM IN ILLINOIS

Sally Bulkley Pancrazio
Illinois State Board of Education
Department of Planning, Research, and Evaluation

This paper was prepared for a symposium, "Accounting for Accountability: Good Works or Symbolic Politics?", Politics in Education program, Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Boston, MA, April 16, 1990. Views expressed in this paper are not necessarily those represented by the Illinois State Board of Education.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
S. B. Pancrazio
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA023056

BUILDING AN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM IN ILLINOIS

-abstract-

This paper provides a brief historical context for the development of political events in Illinois leading to the establishment and implementation of a performance accountability system: school report cards. The paper argues that school report cards are yet another mechanism for accountability: a public reporting mechanism. While what happens across the States influences policymakers in a given state, local conditions and ethos also shape the result. While school report cards in Illinois may have been perceived as political symbols in response to public criticism of the schools, they have the potential for assisting in real school reform.

***

The Emergence of Accountability as a State Issue

The State's role in regulating and monitoring its public schools clearly expanded during the decade of the 80s. For a variety of reasons, public clamor over the quality of student performance led state policymakers to extend their sphere of influence. Although states vary considerably in their scope of regulation, intervention, and involvement, states now are, as Kaagan and Coley (1989, p.3) describe, "smack in the middle of the action, wrestling with matters of school effectiveness, teacher policy, curriculum emphases, and student performance."

These recent changes in state involvement in the very essence of schooling were most often spearheaded by Governors and state legislators responding to various state and national reports concerning the condition of public schooling in their state. The term "accountability" emerged as a predominant theme across state legislatures as education leaders asked for more state financial resources in response to legislated reform. In order to obtain support for the necessary increases in state funding, legislators, taxpayers, and the representatives of business and industry asked as a condition of support that the education system become more accountable for meeting its purposes, e.g. assuring that students are

learning in areas important to the public's expectation and at appropriate levels to assure the development of an educated citizenry and literate and productive workforce.

The term "accountability" has several different meanings. According to Linda Darling-Hammond (1989), accountability can refer to political accountability, bureaucratic accountability, professional accountability, legal accountability and market accountability. The various mechanisms used in these forms of accountability safeguard the public interest. Used in the context of increasing fiscal support to attain specific reforms, and hence results, accountability in education has become more narrowly defined to mean fair return for value given, probably a hybrid of both political and market accountability. (See later reference to Linda Darling-Hammond's use of this concept.)

Terry Peterson (OERI, 1988), Chair of the U. S. Department of Education's OERI Study Group on State Accountability which was studying the responses across the states, said:

> . . .citizens want to know in concrete terms what they are receiving in return for their hard-earned tax dollars invested in public education. Governors, legislators, state leaders . . . are being called upon to provide more financial support for public schools. They naturally want to be assured that the support yields an adequate return."

Mechanisms of Accountability

State education agencies traditionally used accountability mechanisms such as fiscal audits, school accreditation standards, and teacher certification rules to assure the public that schools were operating at least at a minimal level and were thus eligible to continue to receive tax monies to serve the public good. None of these mechanisms typically focus on how well, or how poorly, students or schools or districts were learning, which generally characterizes the specific and unique mission that schools have as an institution of society. (Note that state education agencies have begun to incorporate performance-based indicators within their accreditation structures or regulatory systems for public schools.) In an age of wide-spread recognition for the need for educational reform, these mechanisms were not sufficient to inform policymakers or the public on how well the reforms are working.

Several assumptions underlie the importance of making information available to the public about the performance of public services in general:

--the people have the right to know how institutions using public money are performing,

--having such information contributes to the public making more informed decisions,

--through public disclosure, public services will be motivated to improve their services through public reporting,

Various state accountability systems were developed. A survey conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers found that 23 states had (or said they had) "a comprehensive system of indicators" as part of their state performance accountability systems (OERI, 1988). (Whether these indicator systems reflect the information/statistical systems already in place for other reasons--thus, making of value information that was already available and referred to by different names--is another issue and won't be discussed in this paper.)

Linda Darling-Hammond (1989) makes the point that "no single form of accountability operates alone in any major area of public life. Hybrid forms are developed to provide checks and balances and to more carefully target vehicles for safeguarding the public interest toward the particular matters they can best address."

No where are these hybrid forms more apparent that in the types of information systems being developed by the states to report on the performance of schools and students. Two of these forms are indicator systems and state issued-school report cards. Indicator systems appear to be more comprehensive and diagnostic and won't be discussed in this paper. Report cards can be viewed as one mechanism of a state's accountability system: the public reporting mechanism.

States with School Report Cards

While many states claim to have accountability systems fewer claim to be using school report cards as a mechanism for reporting to the public, even though accountability means in this context "reporting to the public on the performance of the schools." During a telephone survey conducted by staff within the Illinois State Board of Education (March 1, 1990 - April 6, 1990), representatives of thirteen states indicated that their state releases performance and contextual information by school to parents or the media, and fifteen states reported they had plans to do so.

Unless the public has access to such information about its schools, it is likely that accountability systems will be only symbolic gestures. (See Appendix A for list of states with school report cards, those planning such similar school performance reports, and the authorizing reference for doing so.)

The Illinois Response to School Accountability

On February 25, 1985, Governor James R. Thompson, in an unprecedented State-of-the-State address on education, proposed the development and issuance of school report cards, as part of an Illinois Better Schools Program. His proposal identified a set of data including test scores, graduation rate, and dropout rate on which each school would report. There was little response to that particular proposal, from either the public or members of education groups.

In an earlier time period, the spring of 1983, the Illinois Commission for the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Schools, a group of 12 legislators from the Illinois House and Senate and eight other lay members, formed by a Senate resolution, proposed a series of education reform proposals, emerging out of public hearings across Illinois and the results of a comprehensive series of studies of education mandates conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education, beginning in 1981. The Commission's report was released in January 1985. No mention was made in the Commission's report of school report cards. (See Illinois State Board of Education, The Education Package of 1985, and Illinois Commission on the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Education, Excellence in the Making, January 1985).

The number, form, and character of education legislation during the 1985 legislative session caused it later to be called "The Year of Education" (State Board of Education, The Education Package of 1985, 1985).

In the wanning days of the legislative session (generally held between February and June 30th), the Governor called on the leaders of the House and Senate, the newly appointed Illinois State Superintendent, Ted Sanders, and a few others, in a summiting process, to come to a consensus of a proposed Education Reform Act. At that point, the Senate Republicans refused to agree to the overall proposed reform provisions, numbering nearly 170, after having done so on individual provisions, unless it contained a requirement for school report cards, a provision not originally included. In fact they held the reform act hostage until the Democrats agreed to the provision. Agreement was obtained. The Better

Schools Accountability Act (which required the school report cards) was included in the reform act (Public Act 85-1422) as Section 10-17a, The Illinois School Code. It was passed by the Illinois General Assembly, and its requirement for Illinois school districts and schools to report on its performance to the public schools became effective on or before October 31, 1986. Since then, the Illinois State Board of Education has developed four annual report cards for its nearly 4,000 public schools.

The Illinois school report cards are a 12-page booklet, prepared by the Illinois State Board of Education, containing statistics, narrative information, and graphs. A camera-ready copy for each school is sent to the district superintendent by mid-September along with guidelines for dissemination and a summary profile of data on all schools in the district. Most of the information contained in the report cards is required by the law, but the cards also contain other information. (See Appendix B for a copy of the legislation.)

The Illinois school report cards contain information at the school, district, state, and where possible, national level, for the following categories: student characteristics, performance characteristics, instructional resources, teacher information, and financial information. The categories roughly follow an input-resources/process-context/output model. The State Board of Education uses data reported to it by district and school personnel from at least seven different data sources.

(Because the information from districts and schools is now publicly released, accuracy of the information has been enhanced greatly. Significant efforts at the state and local efforts are expended to verify and correct the data in the school report cards prior to their release.)

Procedures Taken to Implement the School Report Card Requirement

A broadly-based group of representatives of various special interests group was established by the State Superintendent Sanders to advise the staff on definitions of indicators, procedures for collecting and reporting the information, and guidance for managing the public and media upon release of the first school report cards in October 1986.

Groups represented on the Report Card Advisory Council were: Illinois School Boards Association, Illinois State Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Association of School Administrators, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Principals Association, Illinois Association of School Public Relations, Illinois

Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers, Illinois Taxpayers' Federation, Chicago Public Schools, Illinois Parents-Teachers Association, Designs for Change, an advocacy group based in Chicago, and researchers with special expertise in school finance and educational equity.

The controversial nature of the requirement soon became apparent. There was a desire on the part of the district superintendents and school boards to not implement the requirement as originally written, i.e. report cards showing comparative information by school. In order to proceed in a timely and responsible fashion and comply with the law, and attempting to provide a better balance (e.g. less opposition) in the Report Card Advisory Council, other representatives from non-education groups, such as the Illinois Fair Schools Coalition, the Illinois League of Women Voters and the Network for Youth Service, were added to the Council.

There was rarely consensus. Arguments as to why something could or could not be done or should or should not be done became better articulated, however. An unforeseen consequence of the presence of highly-vocal education interest groups held down the expansion of non-required data elements reported on the school report cards being advocated by the community or advocacy groups, particularly attainment data by race, gender, and handicap categories.

As the guidelines for complying with the school report card requirement were developed by staff, and procedures for collecting, reporting, and disseminating the cards were established, staff held a series of more than a dozen regional meetings with district and school administrators to inform them about the process. They met with stiff resistance to the requirements from administrators.

Videotapes on the school report card were designed and disseminated for use by school personnel to use with parents. (Follow up data indicate that the videotapes were used to inform administrator groups and other school personnel, rather than parents, if they were used at all.)

The Media

One of the requirements in the legislation is that the school district must release its school report cards to a newspaper of "general circulation" (defined as a daily newspaper serving the geographic area in which the school is located). Recognizing that there would be significant interest in the information in the school report cards by the media, meetings were held by State Board of Education staff with radio, television, newspaper and other media to prepare them for the release prior to the release date for the school

report cards (on or before October 31, 1986). Definitions and limitations of the data elements were provided. The press coverage was unprecedented in its volume. Never before had uniform data on Illinois schools been available to the public.

Apparently, the work with the media was successful. In a survey of Illinois district superintendents, to which 92% responded, following the first release of the school report cards, 93% of the respondents reported that newspapers had reported their school report card information, 24% radio, 5% television, and 6% other. When asked if media reporting of information from the report cards was complete, accurate, and fair, 55% said it was complete, 80% said it was accurate, and 78% said it was fair.

Objections to the media rankings of schools (usually by ACT scores or performance on the state reading test) has continued by some district administrators and counselors. Generally, however, media placed the test results within the context of proportion of students who come from low income families or from high/low wealth districts. (For more recent examples of the same phenomena, see Sun-Times and Chicago Tribune articles on school report cards, November 1, 1989.)

The Educational Establishment Opposed the School Report Cards

Following the publicity surrounding the passage of the Education Reform Act, response by the associations representing the district superintendents, school boards, teacher groups and others was immediate. They were united in opposition to the requirement calling for school report cards. (See Education USA/November 27, 1989, and the Report on Education Research, November 29, 1989, New York Times, November 17, 1989) for similar reactions in New Jersey on the release of its first, and perhaps last, school report cards.)

While the events to develop the procedures, formats, and design of the school report cards proceeded, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, with support from the Illinois School Boards Association, other administrative groups, and to some extent, the two teachers' unions, supported a bill to change the reporting requirement from a school report to a district report. The bill was heard by the House Elementary and Secondary Committee in June 1986. Representatives of education groups, except the State Board of Education, supported the change to a district report. Representatives of the State Board of Education, the Illinois Taxpayers Association, the Farm Bureau, The Illinois State Chamber of Commerce, and Designs for Change opposed the change to a district card.

Briefly, their arguments against the school report cards included the following.

--We are already releasing this information in our annual reports: this requirement is not necessary.
--Schools cannot be compared with each other. It's like comparing "apples to oranges." To do so pits one school against another.
--There are problems in education more important than accountability, like funding.
--People in the schools will cheat and manipulate the data to make themselves and their schools look good. The data won't mean anything.
--Test scores don't measure every important component. of learning. Things like parenting, self esteem, motivation won't get included.
--Parents won't understand the school statistics. All they care about is how their child is doing, if that.
--Parents will select schools on test scores or for other non-education reasons.
--Some of our best teachers are in schools that have low test scores and the cards won't show their efforts.
--Our kids are dumber (or poorer) than the kids in the suburban schools. Our schools are going to look bad because our kids aren't as smart, or as wealthy, and won't do as well.
--We tell our community that all our schools are good schools. With school report cards, the media will rank schools and our community will think we lied to them.

Probably the most vociferous argument against the release of the report cards was the concern that the data in the cards would permit comparisons between and among schools. (Prior to this time, only the Chicago Board of Education regularly and publicly released the results of its testing program by school.) While people seemed to talk about knowing where the "best schools in Illinois were" (e.g. certain suburban schools in wealthy areas), there was no uniform data on which to make such claim.

The issue of comparisons had other facets. Many district superintendents said that they only wanted their schools to be compared with themselves, that is, the school report cards should contain data only about their school in comparison with themselves at a previous time. The reform act also called for state assessment at grades 3, 6, 8 and 10 (changed later to 11) to be phased in at a time after the release of the first school report cards. It was difficult to relate and communicate the future testing requirement (cross sectional) to school districts who argued for "more meaningful testing results" necessitating a longitudinal approach. The inherent conflict and political tensions in

the purposes of state testing (for state use only versus diagnostic purposes at the local level) remains today in Illinois.

The above arguments were made to the Illinois House Elementary and Secondary Committee as it considered changing the law from school reports to district reports.

Public Groups Supported the School Report Card Requirement

Briefly, arguments in support of the school report card included the following.

--Given the amount of public tax dollars expended by the schools, the public has the right to know how its schools are doing.

--It is necessary to have information at the school level since the most likely site for improvement is the school. Reporting data by district washes out any differences and such broad comparison groups as districts are essentially meaningless.

--School personnel are trying to blame schoolchildren and parents (their lack of wealth, their race or ethnicity, their lack of education, etc) for the low performance of students. They're trying to fix the kids instead of fixing the schools. Schools as institutions should change, and information on schools is necessary to monitor change.

--Although school districts annually release reports about the district, no uniform data, no state averages, no school data, no reference points could be used to measure how that district is doing with the resources it has available to it. More information at the school and state level are needed.

These arguments were given by representatives from non-education groups and the Illinois State Board of Education in opposition to the bill to change the school report to a district report. One legislator, Representative Mary Lou Cowlishaw, the minority leader and a former teacher and journalist, said to the bill's sponsor, as she shook her finger at him, "The public has the right to know how its schools are doing. Indeed, the Illinois General Assembly has the right to know." Almost unanimously, the House Elementary and Secondary Committee voted to oppose any "watering down" of the school report card requirement.

Governor James R. Thompson, the target of a media blitz to change the school report card requirement, publicly reaffirmed his support of the requirement (his own original proposal) during a series of fly-arounds in the State. No further changes were made until July 1988 when the General Assembly added the requirement for schools to report the number of chronic truants in their school. Even recognizing

that the language of the original legislation might need to be fine-tuned, the State Superintendent did not encourage changes in the law during the period of significant opposition to the concept of public reporting by some education groups and the overwhelming support to the concept by public groups. There was a need, he said, to show strong support for accountability, particularly when asking for additional school funding.

Now that there is the belief that the school report card requirement is "here to stay", there are attempts to reopen the discussion toward the end of improving it, rather than doing away with it. During FY 91-91, the Illinois State Board of Education staff will be evaluating the procedures, product, and use of the school report cards, and identifying recommendations for improving the school report cards.

A State Mandate with a Local Ethos

Clearly, the Illinois requirement for school report cards can be categorized as a state mandate, one with heavy top-down support. It was proposed by the Governor, included in the legislative package for comprehensive educational reform in the state under some duress, and then reaffirmed by the representatives of the Illinois General Assembly. The only education groups supporting the requirement were the Illinois State Board of Education and several advocacy groups who monitor the educational establishment.

Yet, there are many instances (some have argued, way too many) of local decision making associated with the school report cards. School districts in Illinois have the following options:

--which norm reference tests to use to report the results on the school report cards. For example, in grade six alone, 31 different forms from 13 different test batteries were used to report the distribution of test scores in comparison with the national norms for those tests. (See Performance Profiles: Illinois Schools Report to the Public, 1988). If schools don't test using nationally normed reference tests at grades 3, 6, 8 and 11, they are not required to report the results or to test using nationally normed reference tests. (Although state tests for these grades are being phased in, only state results for reading and mathematics at grades 3, 6, and 8 are currently available.)

--whether to release Spanish-versions of the report cards. Schools with ten or more Spanish-speaking students are provided with a Spanish version copy for parents in that school.

--how to make it available to parents. Some districts send it home with students, others have it printed in the newspaper, others mail it home, some distribute it with the child's first semester grade card. The manner must be uniform across schools within the district and consistent with similar reporting procedures used in the school district, but the district determines the exact procedure.

--whether to modify the State format to eliminate material regarding grade levels not found in the district. While no alterations may be made in the statistics, numbers, or other data from the state, and all explanatory text regarding the school level which is printed on the report card must appear on the card, an elementary district, for example, may eliminate all information concerning statistics or narrative such as graduation rate or ACT scores that directly relate to a high school district.

--how it defines a college preparatory program in a school in order to report the percent of seniors completing a college preparation program. While the State requirements for admission to state colleges and universities will eventually redefine the college preparatory program, high schools remain free to define it according to local standards.

--whether to supplement the school report cards with additional information. (It appears that wealthier school districts are more likely to add information.)

School Report Cards: Symbols or Reality?

The answer to this question is of course the focus of this symposium and the core of the accountability question in the states. Does public reporting of school performance, as an accountability mechanism, actually improve schools or is it only a political symbol?

When the school report cards in Illinois were first released in 1986 by school districts, several superintendents reported that the release was a "non-event". The expected barrage of telephone calls to the district office or storming the schools did not occur. Few parents seemed to know what they were getting and why they were getting it.

However, the press coverage of Illinois schools, as previously stated, was voluminous. From the press clippings, it was clear that many district superintendents took the opportunity of having to report to their boards and newspapers to showcase their district or a specific school, or an innovative program in one of the schools, to show how well they were doing with the resources they had, to argue for more resources, and to raise questions about why one

school's results were different from that of another's. After four years, the district superintendents have continued to use the school report card data to buttress arguments for the district's own needs. On the other side, one parent group in a wealthy school district, opposing the possibility of increasing taxes, used the school report cards to say that they didn't want to "have to pay Rolls Royce money for a Cadillac education" for their children. Although a sore point for some school personnel, real estate agents use the school report cards to sell houses in some areas. (This observation prompted at least one person to ask: What information did realtors use about the schools before the school report cards and how good could it have been?

The school report cards have introduced some new common language, such as the term mobility, to identify problems and propose solutions. Prior to the school report cards, no systematic measure of student mobility was determined. (It is defined as any enrollment change during the school year, in or out of the school.) A district superintendent in Central Illinois, recognizing that he had many students whose parents moved regularly within the district, thus causing their children to change school frequently and disrupt their education, established a school for mobile children. The bus now picks up the students wherever they are living and brings them to their school, probably the one stable event in their lives.

Another district superintendent, examining the proportion of low income students in schools in his district, noted that his schools were segregated by income. Recognizing the importance of income-integrated pupils, he had his school boundaries redrawn to assure income-integrated schools.

At least once a day since the school report cards have been released, parents who are moving to Illinois or to another district, call staff in the State Board of Education to obtain information about schools in certain locals. These callers are advised on how to obtain school report cards from the Regional Superintendent's offices or from School District offices, where by law they must be made available to any requestor. While the majority of parents may be less aware than aware of the potential in school report cards, the public's collective appetite for information continues to expand. They, like their representatives in the General Assembly, are likely to want more information, not less.

Legislators are provided copies of school report card data for the individual school districts and schools in their respective legislative district. It is not uncommon for agency staff to assist in the interpretation and analysis of the information by legislators and legislative staff.

It has been reported to us that visiting committees evaluating schools for the New England Association and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools have received and used school report card results as part of the evaluative criteria (Buser, 1990). These results are incorporated in the description of the school context.

As part of the databases upon which to redesign a performance based regulatory system for Illinois public schools, the school report card data represent a rich, likely-to-expand, fairly reliable set of indicators with which to describe how schools and school districts are performing with the students enrolled in that system and within the resources provided to them. A new public school regulatory system in Illinois will undoubtedly make specific use of report card data.

Because the school report card database contains such rich data on students, performance indicators, resources, and context, the availability of this database has enhanced research in Illinois. Copies of the computer tapes are annually made available to universities for research possibilities. At least ten doctoral dissertations in Illinois have used the database.

Information on the condition of Illinois education has been enhanced. In addition to the computer tapes sent annually to the Chicago Sun-Times, the Chicago Tribune, and the St. Louis Post Dispatch, the State Board of Education produces written reports each year to the Governor and General Assembly, focusing on a selected topic. (This year the topic is the resource and achievement differential between rich schools and poor schools, a highly-relevant topic in Illinois today in a state contemplating the probability of a school finance constitutional challenge.)

These examples are real.

School reform nationally as well as school reform in Illinois is not a "sometime thing." It will take significant time, resources, and the will to make it happen. It will also take meaningful information. School report cards--and the information contained within them--can be an effective accountability mechanism for assuring that the public is getting a fair return for its money.

IF it is too early to say that accountability efforts such as school report cards represent a vital mechanism to use to achieve meaningful school reform, it is NOT too early to say that they are more than political symbols.

Selected References

Banas, Casey (1989). "'89 school report cards show spending can pay." Chicago Tribune, November 1, 1989, p. 1.

Buser, Robert L. (March 27, 1990). Private Correspondence.

Chicago Sun-Times (1989). Section on "School Report Cards," November 1, 1989, pp. 7, 32-36.

Darling-Hammond, Linda (n.d.) "Accountability for Professional Practice," a paper commissioned by the American Federation of Teachers under a grant from the Exxon Education Foundation, and provided to the Council of Chief State School Officers, 1989, pp 1-32.

DePalma, Anthony (1989). "New Jersey Schools Turn the Tables on Themselves," New York Times, November 17, 1989, B1 - B2.

Education USA (1989). "New Jersey Distributes School Report Cards," November 27, 1989, p. 99.

Illinois Commission on the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Education (1985). Excellence in the Making. Springfield, Illinois, January.

llinois State Board of Education (1985). The Education Package of 1985. Springfield, Illinois.

Illinois State Board of Education (1986). Better Schools Accountability: The Report Cards. Directions and Guidance for Complying with the Law. Springfield, Illinois, April, pp. 1-25.

Illinois State Board of Education (1988). Performance Profiles: Illinois Schools Report to the Public. Springfield, Illinois, Summer, pp. 1-41.

Kaagan, Stephen S. and Coley, Richard J. (1989). State Education Indicators: Measured Strides Missing Steps." Center for Policy Research in Education, Rutgers University, pp 1-36.

Office of Educational Research and Innovation (1988), Creating Responsible and Responsive Accountability Systems. Report of the OERI State Accountability Study Group, U.S. Depart. of Education, Washington, pp. 1-66.

Report on Education Research (1989). "New Jersey Gives Parents Grades on State's Schools," Capitol Publications Inc., Alexandria, Virginia, November 29, 1989, Vol. 21, No. 24, pp. 1-2.

APPENDIX A
STATES' WITH SCHOOL REPORT CARDS
OR PLANS TO PREPARE SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

STATE	SCHOOL REPORT CARD PREPARES	PLANS	AUTHORIZING REFERENCE	ACCESS BY PARENTS
ALABAMA	YES	---	Statute	Upon request
ALASKA	NO	YES	Pending Legislation	Unknown at this time
ARIZONA	NO	NO		
ARKANSAS	NO	YES	Statute	Unknown at this time
CALIFORNIA	YES	---	Statute	Upon request
COLORADO	NO	NO		
CONNECTICUT	NO	YES	Statute	Board meeting
DELAWARE	YES	---	Statute	LEA discretion
FLORIDA	NO	NO		
GEORGIA	NO	YES	Statute	Upon request
HAWAII	YES	---	Unknown	Unknown at this time
IDAHO	NO	NO		
ILLINOIS	YES	---	Statute	Must be given to parents/ newspaper
INDIANA	NO	YES	Statute	Upon request
IOWA	NO	NO		
KANSAS	NO	NO		
KENTUCKY	YES	---	Statute	Published in newspaper (no state averages)
LOUISIANA	YES	---	Statute	Sent home with students
MAINE	YES	---	Policy	LEA discretion
MARYLAND	NO	YES	Resolution	Unknown at this time
MASSACHUSETTS	NO	NO		
MICHIGAN	NO	YES	Statute	Upon request
MINNESOTA	NO	NO		
MISSISSIPPI	YES	---	Policy	Upon request
MISSOURI	NO	NO		
MONTANA	NO	YES	Unknown	Unknown at this time

NEBRASKA	NO	NO		
NEVADA	NO	NO		
NEW HAMPSHIRE	NO	NO		
NEW JERSEY	YES	---	Requested by the Governor	Mailed home (1989 only)
NEW MEXICO	NO	NO		
NEW YORK	YES	---	Regulation	Submitted to Board
NORTH CAROLINA	NO	YES	Unknown	Unknown at this time
NORTH DAKOTA	NO	NO		
OHIO	NO	YES	Statute	Unknown at this time
OKLAHOMA	NO	NO		
OREGON	YES	---	Policy	Upon request
PENNSYLVANIA	NO	YES	Unknown	Unknown at this time
RHODE ISLAND	NO	NO		
SOUTH CAROLINA	NO	NO		
SOUTH DAKOTA	NO	YES	Statute	Unknown at this time
TENNESSEE	NO	NO		
TEXAS	NO	NO		
UTAH	NO	NO		
VERMONT	NO	YES	Unknown	Unknown at this time
VIRGINIA	NO	NO		
WASHINGTON	NO	YES	Statute/ Field test only	Unknown at this time
WEST VIRGINIA	YES	---	Statute	Mailed or hand delivered
WISCONSIN	NO	YES	Regulation	Unknown at this time
WYOMING	NO	NO		
TOTAL	13	15		

School report cards are defined as reports by school that contain such performance data as test scores.

This information was collected by Ms. Toni Waggoner, Statistician, Illinois State Board of Education, by telephone and Chiefline, March 1-April 6, 1990. Grateful acknowledgment is given to Ms. Waggoner.

APPENDIX B

SCHOOLS—ACCOUNTABILITY—CHRONIC TRUANCY

PUBLIC ACT 85-1422

S.B.1856

AN ACT to amend Section 10-17a of "The School Code", approved March 18, 1961, as amended.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 1. Section 10-17a of "The School Code", approved March 18, 1961, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

(Ch. 122, par. 10-17a) [S.H.A. ch. 122, ¶ 10-17a]

§ 10-17a. Better schools accountability. (1) Policy and Purpose. It shall be the policy of the State of Illinois that each school district in this State, including special charter districts and districts subject to the provisions of Article 34,[1] shall submit to parents, taxpayers of such district, and the Governor, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education a school report card assessing the performance of its schools and students. The report card shall be an index of school performance measured against statewide and local standards and will provide information to make prior year comparisons and to set future year targets.

(2) Reporting Requirements. Each school district shall prepare a report card in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this Section which describes the performance of its students by school attendance centers and by district and the district's use of financial resources. Such report card shall be presented at a regular school board meeting subject to applicable notice requirements, and such report cards shall be made available to a newspaper of general circulation serving the district and shall be sent home to parents. In addition, each school district shall submit the completed report card to the office of the district's Regional Superintendent which shall make copies available to any individuals requesting them.

The report card shall be completed and disseminated prior to October 31 in each school year beginning in 1986. The report card shall contain, but not be limited to, actual local school attendance center, school district and statewide data indicating the present performance of the school, the State norms and the following year's targets for the school and school district.

(3)(a) The report card shall include the following applicable indicators of attendance center, district and statewide student performance: percent of students placed in top and bottom quartiles of nationally normed achievement tests; composite and subtest means for college bound students; student attendance rates; count of chronic truancy; percent of students not promoted to next grade; graduation rate; and student mobility, turnover shown as a percent of transfers out and a percent of transfers in.

(b) The report shall include the following applicable indicators of district and statewide school performance: average class size; percent of enrollments in courses in high school mathematics, science, English and social science; amount of time per day devoted to mathematics, science, English and social science at primary, middle and junior high school grade levels; percent of enrollments in college preparatory, general education and vocational education programs; pupil-teacher ratio; pupil-administrator ratio; operating expenditure per pupil; per capita tuition charge; district expenditure by fund in graphic display; average administrator salary; and average teacher salary.

(c) The report card form shall be prepared by the State Board of Education and provided to school districts.

[1] Paragraph 34-1 et seq.

Section 2. This Act takes effect July 1, 1988. [S.H.A. ch. 122, ¶ 10-17a note]

Certified: December 15, 1988

Effective: December 15, 1988